

**EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS
OF COORDINATED FAMILY SERVICES
IN IDAHO**

REPORT TO

GOVERNOR DIRK KEMPTHORNE

AND

**THE SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF
THE 57TH IDAHO LEGISLATURE**



**IDAHO SUPREME COURT
January 12, 2004**

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=====EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the 2001 Session, the Idaho Legislature adopted historic legislation which provided a coordinated family-focused response and a full range of services to support Idaho children and families struggling with divorce, parenting issues after divorce, child support, domestic violence, substance abuse, as well as the unique challenges and barriers that never-married parents face. This legislation sparked three years of expansion of services statewide and an enhancement of resources which are having a significant impact on Idaho's families. Each district now has the full array of family court services and the numbers of Idahoans receiving these services continues to climb. In 2003, over 48,000 Idahoans benefited from the services statewide.

Family Court Services Coordinators and Court Assistance Officers serve an essential role in helping judges resolve complex cases and linking families to court and community resources. In addition, their unique place in the system allows the coordinators to view the court as a whole and identify where gaps exist in service delivery. This unique perspective results in innovative programming and services targeted to meet the needs of the children and families at the local level.

A multi-disciplinary committee comprised of representatives from the judicial, executive and legislative branches as well as private practitioners oversees the implementation of services and recommends policies and procedures for adoption by the Supreme Court. The Children and Families in the Courts Committee meets on a regular basis to expand and enhance available resources and to identify and develop best practices designed to improve case management and case coordination efforts.

COORDINATED FAMILY SERVICES ESTABLISHED BY THE LEGISLATURE Idaho Code Section 32-1401 et. seq., passed in the 2001 Legislative Session, established a coordinated approach to court cases involving families and children in Idaho. The legislation sought to coordinate the diverse cases involving families, assess needs of families and children and to connect these families with services. In response to the needs of families involved in the courts, the legislature appropriated funds for Family Court Services and Court Assistance Offices in each judicial district. In the 2003 Legislative Session, HB 369 established a dedicated "drug court and family court services" fund, allowing a full range of resources to develop.

The capacity of the courts to better serve families and to improve the well-being of children has been substantially improved with the legislative initiative. The full range of services and resources ultimately protect children and strengthen and improve family functioning and the dedicated funds provide stability to the services statewide. These innovative services, which are developed using results from national research and best practice models, are depicted in Figure 1.

Coordination of Cases Involving Children and Families

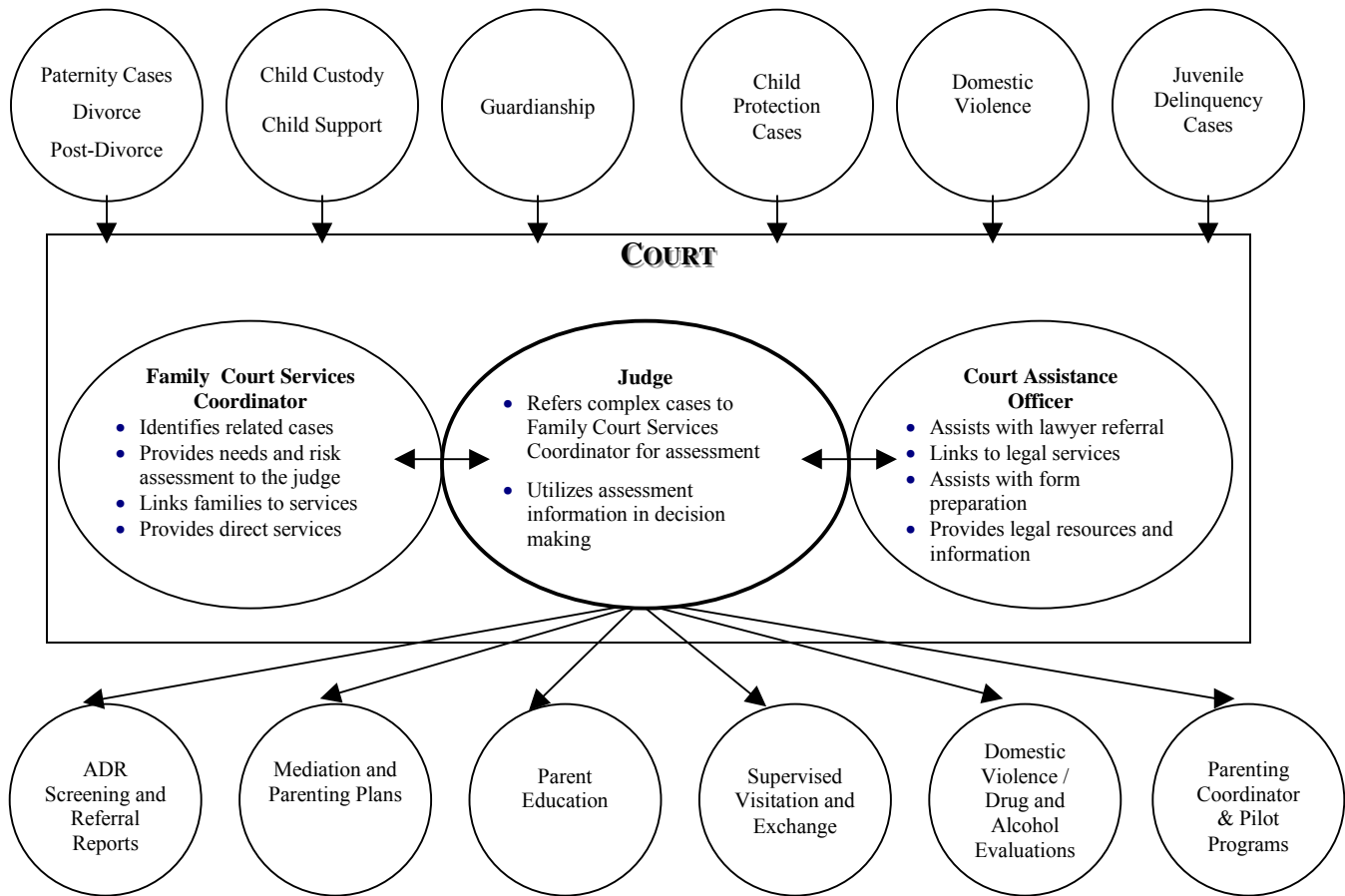


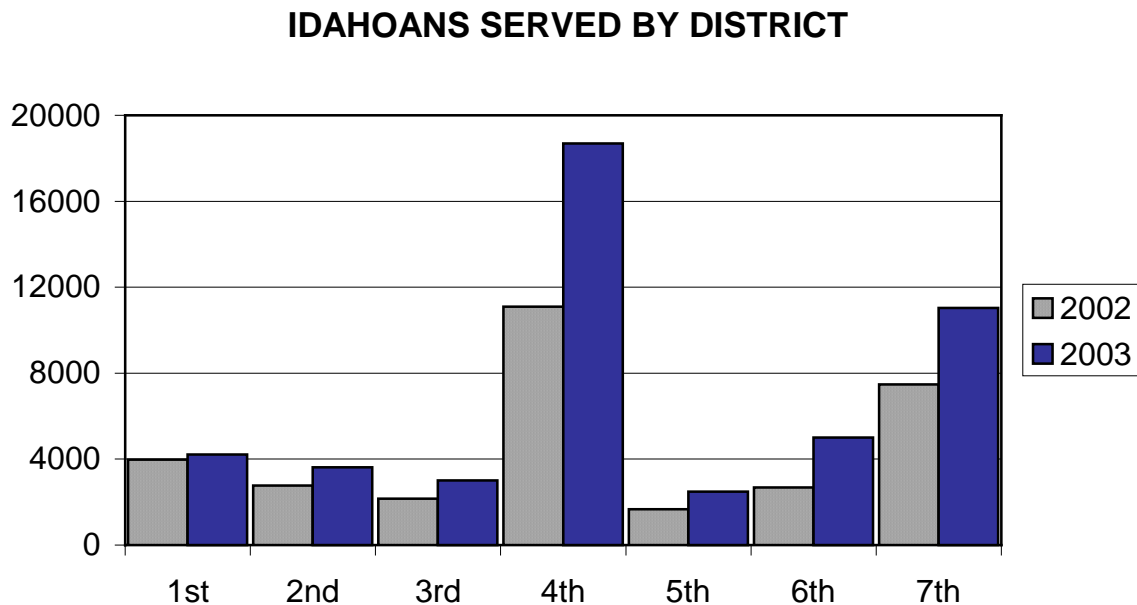
Figure 1: Coordinated Court Services

SERVICES IN EACH DISTRICT – FAMILY COURT SERVICES COORDINATORS AND COURT ASSISTANCE OFFICERS Over 48,000 Idahoans received coordinated family court services in 2003. Through Court Assistance Offices, Family Court Services Coordinators, parent education and other direct services, 50% more Idahoans were served than in 2002 and an untold number of children were impacted in the state.

Six judicial districts now have either a full-time Family Court Services Coordinator or a shared position that includes a Family Court Coordinator with a Court Assistance Officer and/or Drug Court Coordinator position. This position is an important resource to judges in accessing available services for families going through a divorce or modifying terms of a previous divorce as well as for victims of domestic violence. At the direction of the Magistrate Judge, the Coordinator assesses the case and, depending on the needs of the family, may recommend ADR screening, mediation, parent education, effective co-parenting classes, a parenting coordinator, supervised visitation or other services that fit the unique family needs. The Coordinator provides services directly or will refer and coordinate the family services with a qualified service provider.

Court Assistance Officers now serve all judicial districts and offices are located in 26 counties. The Court Assistance Officer acts as a one-stop clearinghouse to access legal services, information, forms and other resources for those involved in family law cases and other civil matters. Deputy Clerks of the Court provide a broad range of services in the remaining counties.

Figure 2.



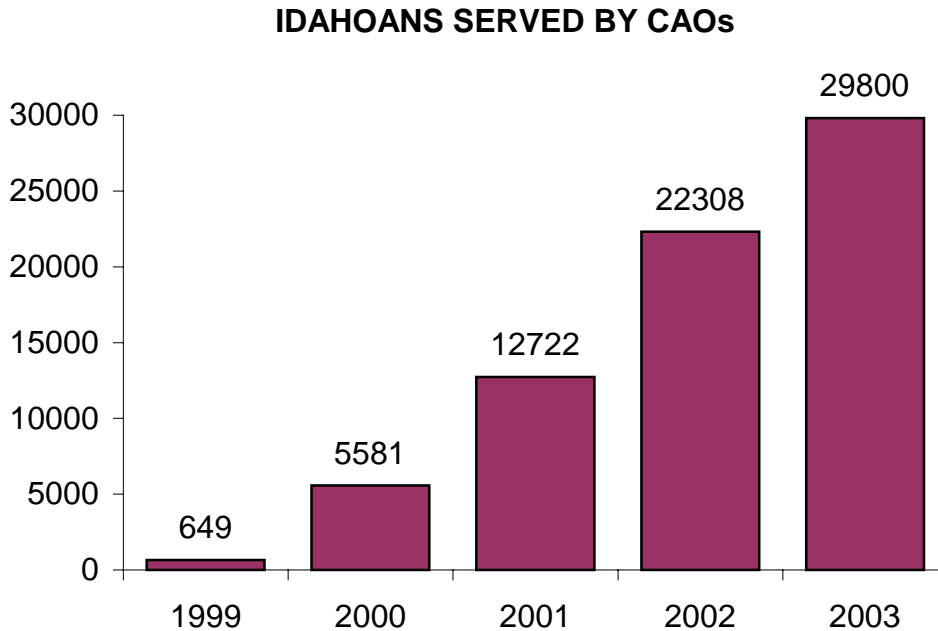
COURT ASSISTANCE OFFICES Nearly 30,000 Idahoans received services from Court Assistance Offices in 2003, a 34% increase from 2002 and over 434% increase from 2000, the first full year of operation. In July, Hon. Michael Dennard, Ada County Magistrate Judge, was appointed as the CAO Project Director. Judge Dennard, who has been a judge for 23 years, has specialized in family law cases for most of his career and brings a unique and innovative perspective to the project.

The Court Assistance Office is a vital component to the full range of services for families. Access to legal referrals, forms and instructions can facilitate easier access to the courts so that the changing needs of many families who are not able to afford an attorney are addressed effectively and immediately. This may potentially reduce the risk of the case escalating and extending potential conflict that overwhelms the courts and those involved in the court process. In addition, Court Assistance Offices provide key services in small claims and other civil cases by connecting litigants to legal resources and providing court forms and instructions, court rules and statutes, and information on court procedures. The Court Assistance Office provides all forms and instructions on their website. In 2003, Ada County alone recorded over 50,000 users of their website, averaging over 4,300 users monthly.

In May 2003, 27 men and women from 15 counties participated in two days of Court Assistance Office training at the University of Idaho College of Law. The training was primarily for deputy court clerks from counties that did not currently have court assistance services. Each new participating county received a “CAO in a Box” kit, containing all of the court forms, instructions, and other materials necessary to start a court assistance program and similar kits were prepared for the remaining counties without trained CAOs. The court clerks continue to receive on-going support from CAOs in their districts.

Figure 3 depicts the increased use of Court Assistance Offices from the first six months of operation in 1999 to the present.

Figure 3.



CASE COORDINATION EFFORTS CONTINUE Case Coordination continues to be key to identifying underlying issues and coordinating services for families. A number of jurisdictions are piloting the use of case management practices that provide for a coordinated approach to handling cases. In addition to efforts initiated last year in Ada and Bannock County, two grants were received to enhance coordination efforts in the state. Ada County Family Violence Court was awarded a grant to provide intensive case management services to high conflict cases. The Sixth and Seventh District received a national grant for a “Differentiated Case Management and Case Coordination Pilot Project”.

Ada County Family Violence Court

In Ada County, a Family Violence Court has been implemented under the direction of Senior Judge Lowell Castleton. In 2003, the Family Violence Court heard 1,025 cases with a substantial number of these cases requiring coordination of domestic relations, domestic violence and criminal no contact orders.

The Family Violence Court is devoted to strengthening families who struggle with multiple issues through early intervention strategies and a single judge for case processing and case coordination. This new practice decreases the risk of inaccurate information sharing, increases consistency and compatibility of court orders, and allows the judge to apply his expertise to meet the unique needs of each family, while assuring continued, close judicial oversight to safeguard the safety and well-being of children. Domestic violence cases involving children are coordinated with the family's related divorce, custody and child support cases, as well as any related misdemeanor assault and battery cases in an effort to protect children and other victims from violence.

Last year, the Family Violence Court was awarded a three-year grant to further enhance the response of the judicial system to families in crisis. Through this grant, the Family Violence Court is promoting a systems change that will improve how the court responds to complex cases involving child maltreatment, domestic violence and family substance abuse. The grant allows the court to provide expanded case management services and treatment to all family members. The court will utilize a multi-disciplinary team approach in managing these complex cases and engage health and welfare, local victim advocacy service agencies, treatment providers, probation officers, mental health providers and other community agencies in the process.

Differentiated Case Management and Case Coordination Pilot Project

A case management and case coordination pilot project is being developed in the Sixth and Seventh Districts. The purpose of the project is to establish innovative case management practices that promote efficient use of family and court resources through the expansion of non-adversarial alternative dispute resolution procedures. This project will focus upon a problem solving approach to meet the needs of families by crafting solutions that promote long-term stability for children and families and minimize the need for subsequent court action. The project involves:

- Identifying families with companion cases and issues appropriate for case coordination.
- Developing case management tracks that address identified family needs.
- Providing court, families and attorneys with information to facilitate improved decision making.
- Tracking process and outcomes to measure effectiveness.

Foster Care Case Coordination Pilot Project in Bannock County

A Foster Care Case Coordination Pilot Project is underway in Bannock County. Judge Bryan Murray coordinates the child protection case with the family's domestic relations companion cases. The goals of the project are to improve outcomes for children by

coordinating cases so that the judge hearing the child protection case also hears related cases involving the family such as civil orders for protection in domestic violence cases, divorce, post-divorce modifications and juvenile corrections. The expected benefits are fewer hearings for families and the court, more consistent orders, earlier identification of issues and necessary interventions to facilitate either reunification of the children with their family or an earlier permanency decision.

“The process has proven to be a very effective way to resolve multiple issues without involving multiple judges and holding multiple hearings. The resulting orders are coordinated to better serve the families and issues are resolved for the entire family unit.”

Judge Murray, Bannock County Juvenile Judge

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION ASSESSMENT In 2003, 217 families or 434 individuals participated in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Assessments statewide. Judges may order parents to undergo an ADR screening to gather more information about the family and the serious issues that are presented before the court.

Families with severe conflict are often faced with many complex issues. For example, in 67% of the cases that underwent an ADR Screening in 2002, there were allegations of serious alcohol or drug abuse. In addition to substance abuse issues, 48% of the families also alleged family violence, and in another 15% of cases, there were concerns regarding the safety of the children that included child abuse and neglect allegations. Mental health issues were present in approximately 16% of the cases that required an ADR Screening.

USE OF MEDIATION SERVICES EXPANDED In 2003, Family Court Services Coordinators either arranged or directly provided mediation services to 546 families. In cases where the court determined mediation would benefit families, state appropriations paid for indigent families to mediate parenting disputes who otherwise would not have been able to afford the service. In addition, Family Court Services Coordinators in Sixth and Seventh Districts are utilizing parent/child mediation for juvenile offenders designed to help juveniles and their families problem solve and reduce the chance of the juveniles returning to court. Seventh District also provides volunteer small claims and victim-offender mediators. Additional training in parent/child mediation will be supported by the Millennium Fund and provided in other areas of the state.

“When parents come to the court unable to agree about the care of their children, they are asking the court to make these decisions for them. Families cannot be divided by declaring winners and losers. When we go through the adversarial process, the strong feelings that come out in the courtroom create barriers that prohibit future cooperation. In the adversarial process, children always lose. The goal of mediation is to make children the winners. The judges of this district believe the children always win when parents make parenting decisions together rather than through the court.”

Seventh District Mediation Brochure

SUPERVISED VISITATION AND EXCHANGE PROGRAM In 2003, there were over 600 families statewide who received supervised visitation services. Cases involving one or more of the following issues benefited by supervised visitation or supervised exchange services:

- family violence
- substance abuse
- allegations or substantiated claims of child physical or sexual abuse or neglect
- parenting skills concerns
- a parent with serious mental health problems
- a flight risk or threats of abduction
- reunifying the parent and child after an extended period of time of separation.

Professional supervised visitation allows contact between the parent and children in the presence of a trained, neutral third party when certain risk factors to children are present. Supervised exchange is the utilization of a trained, neutral third party to facilitate the exchange of the children between the parents when intense conflict exists between the parents.

Also, in late 2002, the U.S. Department of Justice awarded a two-year pilot program to Bannock County to increase supervised visitation and exchange options for families with a history of domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault or stalking. The program, entitled “Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Program” is a collaborative project between Bannock County, Sixth Judicial District Court Services, Family Services Alliance, and the Bannock County Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Taskforce.

PARENT EDUCATION AND EFFECTIVE CO-PARENTING SESSIONS In 2003, over 6,700 parents attended parent education and “Focus on the Children” classes to improve their understanding of the importance of keeping children out of the middle of conflict and to learn the important link between children’s ages and developmentally appropriate parent plans. These classes impacted the lives of an estimated 10,000 children in Idaho during this time period.

Positive evaluations and feedback around the state reflect the value of education on divorcing parents and their children. Third District evaluations consistently show over 90% of attendees recognize the positive impact classes have on their parenting decisions and how parents will relate to each other in the presence of their children. Parents often share their personal experiences of the how the classes have improved their relationship with the other parent and their children. The following story is one example that reinforces the importance of parent education.

I was substituting for another instructor for the first two classes of the series of three parenting classes that are required in the 5th District for divorcing couples. After the second class, a young man came up to me and said, "I want to thank you for these classes." I thought that he was just being polite so I told him that he was welcome and that I hope that they would prove helpful. Then he said, with tears in his eyes, "They already have!" He went on to tell me that he had filed for sole custody of his sons and was hoping that he would be able to just forget that they ever had a mother. After the information provided during the classes about how important it is for children to benefit from both parents involvement in their lives, he had a change of heart. He said that he called his wife and asked if she and the boys would get together with him to talk about their future. The whole family went out for pizza and mom and dad were able to agree that they could work out a shared parenting arrangement so that the boys would have time with both parents. He said that this was such a relief to him and that his boys were handling the divorce so much better, even after only a few days, knowing that they were not going to lose one of their parents.

Cheryl Turoczy Hart, Fifth District Family Court Services Coordinator

INNOVATIVE JUVENILE JUSTICE PROGRAMS An important objective of Idaho's Juvenile Corrections Act is to "provide a continuum of programs" to address the needs of all levels of the offender population. Intervention and prevention programs are essential components to this continuum. Magistrate Judges are active partners in developing and implementing innovative programs at the local level that focus on prevention and intervention of delinquent behavior. Some of the projects that are designed to prevent and reduce delinquent behavior include:

- Status Offender Services Program
- Youth Courts
- "Constructing a Future" Program
- Attendance Court
- Detention Reform Initiative

PILOT PROJECTS AND OTHER INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS INSTITUTED Each family has unique needs during periods of separation, divorce and post-divorce as the family adjusts and the children's developmental needs change. The Family Court Services Coordinators are trained professionals in the areas of family dynamics and child development. They continue to expand their ability to provide parent education classes, one-on-one parenting assistance and to implement court-approved projects on a pilot basis to serve families in their district. The Sandcastles Program, Interim Parenting Time Evaluation Project, Parenting Coordinators as well as case process, case coordination improvements and pilot projects developed by the Foster Care Committee will enhance court-connected services available for families.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION A complete description of Coordinated Family Court Services and an in-depth discussion of the evaluation results are contained in the full report available on the Internet at www.state.id.us/judicial. For additional information, contact: Patricia Tobias, Administrative Director of the Courts - Phone: (208)334-2246 Email: ptobias@isc.state.id.us

=====SERVICES IN EACH DISTRICT

Six judicial districts now have either a full-time Family Court Services Coordinator or a shared position that includes a Family Court Coordinator with a Court Assistance Officer and/or Drug Court Coordinator position. This position is an important resource to judges in accessing available services for families going through a divorce or modifying terms of a previous divorce as well as for victims of domestic violence. At the direction of the Magistrate Judge, the Coordinator assesses the case and, depending on the needs of the family, may recommend ADR screening, mediation, parent education, effective co-parenting classes, a parenting coordinator, supervised visitation or other services that fit the unique family needs. The Coordinator provides services directly or will refer and coordinate the family services with a qualified service provider. The Coordinator plays an important role in viewing the system as a whole and determining where gaps in services or resources exist. The Coordinator's involvement and expertise allows innovation in programming and linking of resources in the community.

At the time of the initial divorce filing, approximately 25% of families experience substantial and intense conflict, and close to one-third of families remain hostile toward each other and in conflict over the children three to five years later (Janet R. Johnston, High-Conflict Divorce. The future of children, Children and Divorce Vol. 4, No. 1, spring 1994).

Often times, the conflict centers around child-rearing matters with underlying issues that complicate the case including concerns regarding the safety of the children, child support, substance abuse, mental health and family violence issues. In these cases, the judge may ask the Coordinator to assess the case and, depending on the issues presented, the ages of the children and needs of the family, the Coordinator may suggest the parties participate in mediation, an ADR Screening, substance abuse and domestic violence evaluations or additional education for parents that will provide skills and information designed to help parents protect their children from conflict.

Court Assistance Officers now serve all judicial districts and offices are located in 26 counties. The Court Assistance Officer acts as a one-stop clearinghouse to access legal services, information, forms and other resources for those involved in family law cases and other civil matters. Deputy Court Clerks provide limited CAO services in the remaining counties.

The Family Court Services Coordinators (FCSC) and Court Assistance Officers (CAO) provide assistance in a number of ways:

- 1) Telephone Inquiries – Questions about available resources and services often come from telephone inquiries. FCSCs and CAOs can save both court personnel time and increase access to the public by providing information about court and community resources over the phone.

- 2) On-site Assistance – Five of the six Coordinators have offices in the courthouse and all Court Assistance Officers maintain their offices in the courthouse. Court clerks refer litigants or potential litigants with family-related issues to the office for immediate assistance.
- 3) Court-ordered Services – The majority of those receiving services are ordered by a judge to seek assistance from the FCSC.
- 4) Community Link – The FCSC and CAO serve as a link between the court and the multitude of resources available in the community and through state and federal organizations. The FCSC and CAO facilitate communications and relations with the resource providers while also acting as a liaison between service providers and the courts.
- 5) Website – The Court Assistance Offices maintain a website allowing on-line access to resources, informational brochures and videos as well as court forms and instructions. In 2003, Ada County alone recorded over 50,000 users of their website, averaging over 4,300 users monthly.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2003 Over 48,000 Idahoans received coordinated family court services in 2003. Through Court Assistance Offices, Family Court Services Coordinators, parent education and other direct services, 50% more Idahoans were served than in 2002 and an untold number of children were impacted in the state.

IDAHOANS SERVED BY DISTRICT

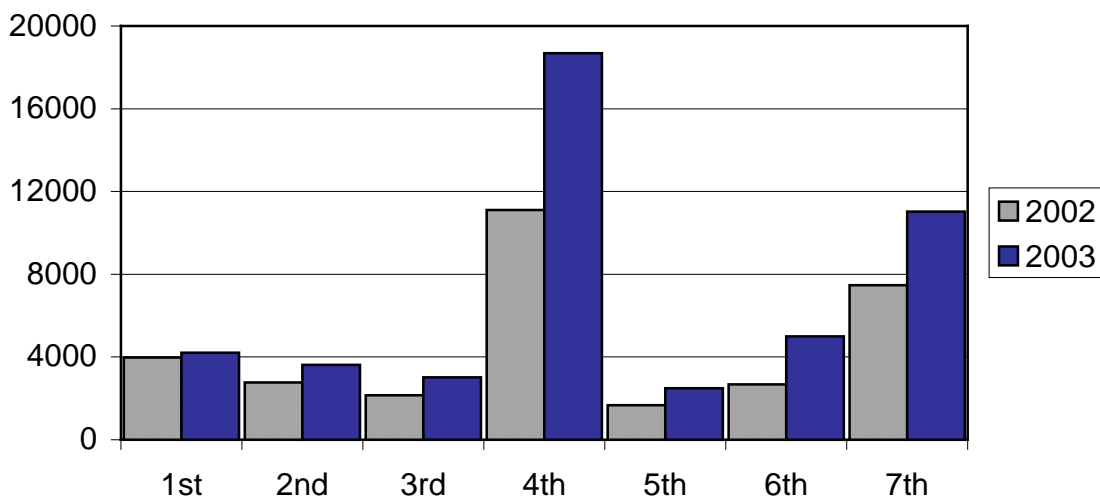


Figure 2: Services in Each District

FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT The First Judicial District is made up of five counties. The judges typically hear over 4,500 family-related cases. The District combines the Family Court Services Coordinator and the Court Assistance Officer job responsibilities to efficiently deliver services in the district. Family Court Service and Court Assistance Offices are located in Kootenai and Bonner Counties.

Services Provided	Description
Parent Education / Focus on Children Workshop	Class provides parents with information about the court process, children's needs, impact of parental conflict on children and discussion of the benefits of mediation.
Mediation	Neutral third party facilitates communications
Supervised Visitation and Exchange	Visitation facilitated through the use of a neutral, third party.
Court Assistance Office	Provides lawyer referral services, forms and instructions.

SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT The Second Judicial District is made up of five counties. The judges typically hear over 2,400 family-related cases. The Second District has Court Assistance Offices in Lewiston and Moscow, also serving the other 3 counties. Recently, a Family Court Services Coordinator was hired to provide services districtwide.

Services Provided	Description
Parent Education / Divorce Orientation Program	Classes are conducted by the Center for New Directions. Classes are held in Clearwater, Idaho, Latah and Nez Perce Counties. Classes provide parents with information regarding children's needs during divorce, impact of parental conflict on children, grief process, transitions and keeping children out of the middle of conflict.
Mediation	Neutral, third party facilitates communications
Supervised Visitation and Exchanges	Visitation facilitated through the use of a neutral, third party.
Court Assistance Office	Provides lawyer referral services, forms and instructions.

THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT The Third Judicial District is made up of six counties. The judges typically hear over 5,800 family-related cases. The Trial Court Administrator coordinates Family Court Services and the district has a Court Assistance Officer in Caldwell, who also assists litigants in the other counties.

Services Provided	Description
Parent Education / Divorcing Parents Class	Class provides parents with information about children's needs, parental conflict, grief process, transitions, mediation and long distance parenting.
Domestic Violence Classes	Classes are offered for those coming to court to seek a domestic violence protection order. The class provide

	information on the court process as well as strategies to protect themselves and their children.
Alternative Dispute Resolution Screenings	ADR screeners gather information from the parties on their current situation, past and current relationships with the other party, risks of violence and other underlying issues. A report is made to the presiding judge.
Mediation	Neutral, third party facilitates communication.
Supervised Visitation and Exchanges	Visitation facilitated through the use of a neutral, third party.
Court Assistance Office	Provides lawyer referral services, forms and instructions.

FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT The Fourth Judicial District is made up of four counties. The judges typically hear over 9,400 family-related cases. Ada County has utilized the services of a Family Court Services Coordinator since 1984. The dedicated fund permits the hiring of support staff, allowing the Family Court Services Coordinator to expand services throughout the district. The Court Assistance Officer in Ada County utilizes an assistant to handle the large caseload in the county. Court Assistance Officers are also available in Valley County.

Services Provided	Description
Parent Education / Focus on Children	Class provides parents with information about the court process, mediation, children's needs, parental conflict, grief process, transitions, child support, age and developmentally appropriate parenting plans.
Comprehensive File Review	File reviews are completed on all cases where there is a contested divorce involving minor children. The court database is researched so that coordination of all cases involving the same family is possible. All domestic violence cases where a divorce is pending are coordinated and heard by the same judge.
Domestic Violence Case Review and Tracking	A comprehensive file review of each domestic filing related to the same family with identification of past and current criminal charges.
Alternative Dispute Resolution Screenings	ADR screeners gather information from the parties on their current situation, past and current relationships with the other party, risks of violence and other underlying issues. A report is made to the presiding judge.
Effective Co-parenting and Family Resolution	Licensed professionals provide parents with skills to improve communication and reduce parental conflict. Individuals learn how to take responsibility for their own communication and recognize how their own behaviors put up barriers to resolving disputes.
Mediation	Neutral third party facilitates communication.

Supervised Visitation and Exchange	Visitation facilitated through the use of a neutral third party.
Court Assistance Office	Provides lawyer referral services, forms and instructions.

FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT The Fifth Judicial District is made up of eight counties. The judges typically hear approximately 5,000 family-related cases. A Family Court Services Coordinator and three Court Assistance Officers serve the district.

Service Provided	Description
Parent Education / Mediation Orientation and Parenting Apart Class	Class provides parents with information about children's needs, parental conflict, grief process, and how to keep children out of the middle.
Sandcastles Program	Program for children in a high conflict divorce.
Alternative Dispute Resolution Screenings	ADR screeners gather information from the parties on their current situation, past and current relationships, risks of violence and other underlying issues. A report is made to the presiding judge.
Supervised Visitation	Visitation facilitated through the use of a third party.
Court Assistance Office	Provides lawyer referral services, forms and instructions.

SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT The Sixth Judicial District is made up of six counties. The judges typically hear over 3,500 family-related cases. The district combines the Family Court Services Coordinator and the Drug Court Coordinator positions.

Service Provided	Description
Parent Education / Focus on Children	Class provides parents with information about the effects of divorce on children, children's needs, parental conflict, grief process, transitions, and how to keep children out of the middle of conflict.
Interim Parenting Time Evaluation	The Interim Parenting Time Evaluation is a pilot project for parents who have not been able to resolve parenting disputes in mediation. The project provides information to judges who have been asked to make interim custody decisions in divorce cases.
Supervised Visitation and Exchange	Visitation services contracted through licensed and insured providers.
Mediation	Services contracted through court approved mediators who facilitate communication between parties with domestic disputes.
Parent/Child Mediation	Mediation technique to assist families to effectively handle juvenile offenders through increased communication and problem solving strategies.
Court Assistance Office	Provides lawyer referral services, forms and instructions.

SEVENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT The Seventh Judicial District is made up of ten counties. The judges typically hear over 4,500 family-related cases. Family Court Services was established in the Seventh Judicial District in July 2000. The Family Court Services Coordinator and Court Assistance Officer serve all ten counties and travel as needed to conduct workshops and assist litigants.

Service Provided	Description
Parent Education / Focus on Children	Class provides parents with information about the court process, children's needs during divorce, parental conflict, grief process, transitions, keeping children out of the middle of conflict and assistance with parenting plans and schedules.
Parenting Evaluations	The primary purpose of a parenting evaluation is to assess the family and provide the courts, the parents, and the attorneys with objective information and recommendations.
Alternative Dispute Resolution Screenings	ADR screeners gather information from the parties on their current situation, past and current relationships with the other party, risks of violence and other underlying issues. A report is made to the presiding judge.
Mediation	Services contracted through court-approved mediators who facilitate communication between parties with domestic disputes.
Family Reconciliation Conferencing	Mediators provide assistance and tools to help families succeed when a juvenile is released from detention or incarceration.
Supervised Visitation and Exchanges	Visitation facilitated through the use of a neutral third party.
Court Assistance Office	Court Assistance Officer travels to each county.

=====COURT ASSISTANCE OFFICES

The Court Assistance Office (CAO) is a one-stop clearinghouse to access legal services and other resources for those involved in family law cases and other civil (non-criminal) court matters. There are currently court assistance offices in twenty-six courthouses around Idaho, and along with deputy court clerks, serve all of Idaho's 44 counties. Some of the court assistance office resources, such as an attorney roster, court forms and instructions, can be accessed directly from their website. Other services and materials can be accessed by calling or visiting the Court Assistance Office.

PRO-SE LITIGANTS IN IDAHO The Idaho Supreme Court's Committee to Increase Access to the Court began planning the Court Assistance Office Project in 1998. The Committee had become concerned about the increasing numbers of persons without representation by an attorney called "pro se" litigants involved in civil matters, a trend which was especially pronounced in family law cases. All counties in Idaho have been experiencing a uniformly high rate of self representation in these types of cases in recent years. In a 2002 study of seven counties (Bonner, Latah, Payette, Elmore, Twin Falls, Power and Bingham) an average of over 75% of defendants in domestic relations cases were "pro-se" or without a lawyer while plaintiffs averaged 39%. This phenomenon has slowed the judicial process, and led to growing dissatisfaction with the court system on the part of the litigants, and mounting frustration on the part of all parties involved, litigants and court personnel alike.

The first priority of the CAOP is to connect pro se litigants with attorneys where possible, and to provide informational resources to assist them in representing themselves where attorney representation is unavailable or not desired. In order to supply the services for which the offices were established, an attorney survey was mailed to all licensed attorneys in or near the counties in which the offices are located. The survey requested a wide range of information designed to assist litigants in acquiring representation. Based on the results of this survey, attorney rosters were prepared and are made available to visitors to the offices.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2003 Nearly 30,000 Idahoans received services from Court Assistance Offices in 2003, a 34% increase from 2002 and over 434% increase from 2000, the first full year of operation. In July, Hon. Michael Dennard, Ada County Magistrate Judge, was appointed as the CAO Project Director. Judge Dennard, who has been a judge for 23 years, has specialized in family law cases for most of his career and brings a unique and innovative perspective to the project.

The Court Assistance Office is a vital component to the full range of services for families. Access to legal referrals, forms and instructions can facilitate easier access to the courts so that the changing needs of many families who are not able to afford an attorney are addressed effectively and immediately. This may potentially reduce the risk of the case escalating and extending potential conflict that overwhelms the courts and

those involved in the court process. In addition, Court Assistance Offices provide key services in small claims and other civil cases by connecting litigants to legal resources and providing court forms and instructions, court rules and statutes, and information on court procedures. The Court Assistance Office provides all forms and instructions on their website. In 2003, Ada County alone recorded over 50,000 users of their website, averaging over 4,300 users monthly.

The following graph shows the increased use from the first six months of operation in 1999 to present.

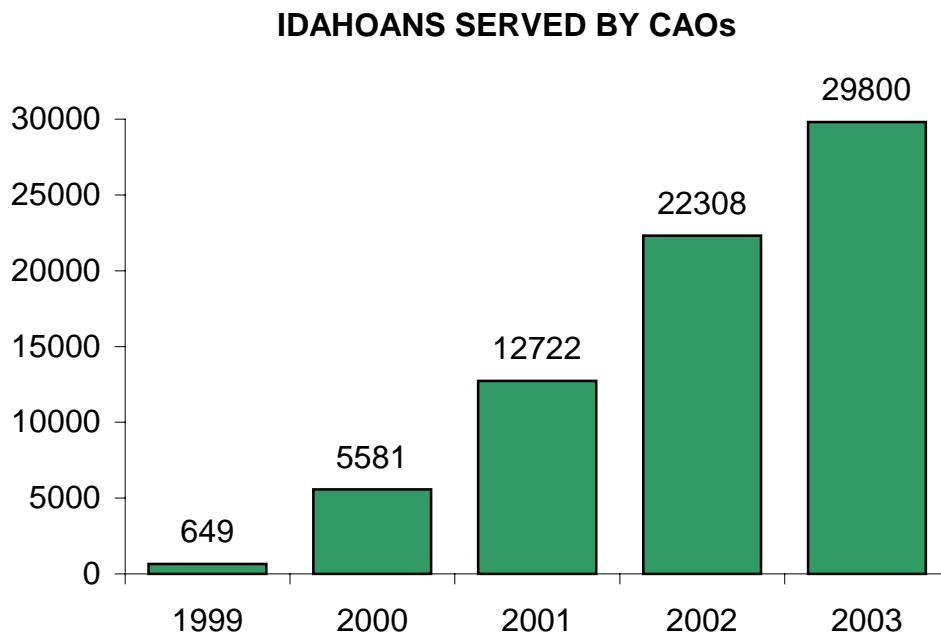


Figure 3: Court Assistance Offices

In May 2003, 27 men and women participated in two days of Court Assistance Office training at the University of Idaho College of Law. The training was primarily for deputy court clerks from counties that did not currently have court assistance services. Each new participating county received a “CAO in a Box” kit, containing all of the court forms, instructions, and other materials necessary to start a court assistance program. Similar kits were prepared for the remaining seven counties without trained CAOs. The court clerks received introductory training and receive on-going support from other CAOs in their districts.

The Access Committee has recommended to the Supreme Court that it approve standard forms for divorce, custody, paternity, child support, name change, and landlord-tenant cases. CAOs also stock domestic violence, and small claims forms. A subcommittee chaired by Ada County Magistrate Judge David Day developed the family law forms. Landlord tenant forms were developed by a subcommittee chaired by Owyhee County Magistrate Judge Thomas Ryan. The CAO forms have been approved by the Access

Committee after scrutiny by judges and attorneys, and are updated regularly to reflect changes in the law.

Most CAO services are free and available to all members of the public, regardless of income. However, some counties do charge for packets of court forms and instructions. Waivers of these charges are available to indigents. Anyone may download forms and instructions from the CAO web site (www2.state.id.us/cao) without charge. Proceeds from the sale of forms packets remain with each county to help defray the copying costs and costs of housing the CAO office.

A customer satisfaction survey is made available in each office for litigants to complete after they have received services from the Court Assistance Officer. Of over 630 surveys completed, 99% of those who answered the question felt the information provided by the office was helpful or informative. Over 98% felt the information provided by the office helped to increase their satisfaction with the court process.

In addition to the satisfaction surveys completed at the time of the visit, in 2002 the program conducted an informal follow-up call survey to a sample of those who utilized the services of the CAO. The goal of the telephone survey was to learn if, after completing the court process, the user had a favorable feeling about the information and assistance obtained from the Court Assistance Officer. Forty litigants were reached in Ada and Latah Counties. Of the thirty who responded to the statement, "The program helped me understand the legal system better", 29 strongly agreed or agreed. The same thirty respondents strongly agreed or agreed to the statement: "The program helped me make better decisions." Seventeen of these respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their court experience. Twenty-nine of the thirty respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with their experience with the Court Assistance Office Program.

=====CASE COORDINATION

Case coordination in many rural counties in Idaho is an automatic and natural problem solving approach as many judges rely on their “institutional memory” of previous cases regarding the family and the reality of having only one judge to hear multiple legal issues that involve the same family. The rural judge is often familiar with previous cases involving the same family and the family’s history.

Case coordination in larger counties is more challenging as larger counties may consist of specialized divisions that process criminal offenses, family violence, child abuse and neglect and domestic relations cases separately by necessity to more efficiently handle the large volume of cases. The separation of jurisdiction and case processing can result in increased fragmentation of services to families, inconsistent and conflicting court orders and potentially higher costs to the family as family members must appear before a number of judges multiple times, and often with separate attorneys for each case. A judge who is hearing a child custody case may not be aware of a parallel hearing that involves a criminal offense of a parent and is missing vital information that helps explain the way the litigants are interrelating.

Family Court Coordinators can help balance the considerable needs of families who appear in court with complex dynamics and personal crisis. In complex cases, it is not unusual for the coordinator or ADR Screener to provide the court with vital information regarding the numerous issues and cases facing the family members. Recommendations regarding the often-considerable needs of the family are addressed. This creates a problem-solving approach that helps families focus on how they can safely and justly resolve the issues and what is in the long-term best interests of the children.

This more coordinated approach to case management reduces court time, provides increased access to services and more consistent judicial decision making. A study published by the National Center for State Courts in 1992 indicated that 40% of all families are involved in more than a single case. Lack of coordination is a disservice to families by not allowing the judges full knowledge of the entire scope of problems in a family but may also allow the family members to manipulate the court system with conflicting stories or misinformation. Currently, pilot projects in Ada County, Sixth and Seventh Districts and Bannock County are underway to more effectively identify and manage related court cases.

ADA COUNTY FAMILY VIOLENCE COURT In Ada County, a Family Violence Court has been implemented under the direction of Senior Judge Lowell Castleton. The Family Violence Court is devoted to strengthening families who struggle with multiple issues through early intervention strategies and a single judge for case processing and case coordination. This new practice decreases the risk of inaccurate information sharing, increases consistency and compatibility of court orders, and allows the judge to apply his expertise to meet the unique needs of each family, while assuring continued, close judicial oversight to safeguard the safety and well-being of children. Domestic violence

cases involving children are coordinated with the family's related divorce, custody and child support cases, as well as any related misdemeanor assault and battery cases in an effort to protect children and other victims from violence. In 2003, the Family Violence Court heard 1,025 cases with a substantial number of these cases requiring coordination of domestic relations, domestic violence and criminal no contact orders.

The Court has five major goals: 1) to keep families and children safe while providing appropriate social service referrals, community support and protection through the judicial process, 2) to decrease the risk of duplicating or fragmenting services between courts and social service agencies by creating an avenue of greater consistency in court decisions and information sharing; 3) to improve services to families with children by providing a comprehensive and collaborative treatment/service plan focused on the needs of the children and the needs of the family system; 4) to monitor treatment compliance and accountability through active case management and coordination; and 5) to strengthen child safety and improve family well-being through early identification of all issues contributing to the family's distress.

Last year, the Family Violence Court was awarded a three-year grant to further enhance the response of the judicial system to families in crisis. Through this grant, the Family Violence Court is promoting a systems change that will improve how the court responds to complex cases involving child maltreatment, domestic violence and family substance abuse. The grant allows the court to provide expanded case management services and treatment to all family members. The court will utilize a multi-disciplinary team approach in managing these complex cases and engage health and welfare, local victim advocacy service agencies, treatment providers, probation officers, mental health providers and other community agencies in the process.

I would like to provide you with an update on probationers assigned from Family Violence Court. I am very pleased with the program and the increased compliance and cooperation with probationers on this program. To date we have 111 cases and only 10 cases are in non-compliant status.

There are many significant factors I believe contribute to the success of this program. The most important factor is hearing these cases in a timely manner and sentencing a defendant soon after the crime has been committed. Immediate intervention and program enrollment accelerate the process of rehabilitation. It is much more effective to address a dysfunctional situation as soon as possible. Waiting many months or even up to a year for judgment can delay and many times aggravate a dysfunctional family.

The ability for one judge to hear all matters, civil and criminal, is very effective. This judge is familiar with the family dynamics and can rule accordingly. Different cases assigned to different judges can deter a judges ability to see the whole picture.

Many victims in a domestic violence situation remain with the perpetrator. Therefore, children remain in the household also. The sooner we can address the violence, substance abuse, and mental issues of the defendant, the safer a family can be. Any assistance to the victim is also very helpful. I am elated with the progress and results of this program and hope Ada County can continue to offer a Family Violence Court. Nancy Cladis, Director, Ada County Probation Services

I finished the custody and visitation, child support, etc., issues today on a very complex case -- all the real "family" issues, and ruled -- so the kids wouldn't have to wait.

I then addressed both parents -- who have been before me now for over a year, with DV, criminal, and now the divorce. The father (a computer programmer) spent 10 days in jail. But he's a good man, and everyone admits that even though he is (was) controlling, he's a great father and decent person. The mother's a good mother and school teacher. They just never had a good marriage. They have a daughter 12 and a son 5.

I addressed the parents after ruling on all custody and other related issues. I told them I thought they were both trying hard to do what was right for their children. I hoped that having the same judge had helped, and not created a sense of bias towards one or the other.

The father shocked me by saying that while he is appealing his criminal conviction (he just thinks the jury was wrong), that he doesn't regret for a moment the whole experience because of all he has and is learning. He said that supervised probation was educational for him (of course, he's a model probationer, too), and that the Pathways DV course he's taking has been a great experience for him, and that he feels he will be a better father and co-parent as a result. His wife (soon to be ex) concurred that it had all worked so much better that she had ever expected, and her husband was a good father, although they could no longer remain married. And she would work with him amicably because she no longer had any reason not to. Again, another affirmation that something's going right here.

Senior Judge Lowell Castleton, Ada County Domestic Violence Court

DIFFERENTIATED CASE MANAGEMENT AND CASE COORDINATION PILOT PROJECT

A case management and case coordination pilot project is being developed in the Sixth and Seventh Districts. The purpose of the project is to establish innovative case management practices that promote efficient use of family and court resources through the expansion of non-adversarial alternative dispute resolution procedures. This project will focus upon a problem solving approach to meet the needs of families by crafting solutions that promote long-term stability for children and families and minimize the need for subsequent court action. The project involves:

- Identifying families with companion cases and issues appropriate for case coordination.
- Developing case management tracks that address identified family needs.
- Providing court, families and attorneys with information to facilitate improved decision making.
- Tracking process and outcomes to measure effectiveness.

The anticipated benefits are to: 1) Promote long term resolution for families by identify and addressing underlying issues in the family to allow judges to make more informed decisions about the best interests of the children. 2) Connect parents with resources that aid them to accept parental responsibility and accountability for resolving custody disputes. 3) Develop best practices for other jurisdictions.

FOSTER CARE CASE COORDINATION PILOT PROJECT IN BANNOCK COUNTY

A Foster Care Case Coordination Pilot Project is underway in Bannock County. Judge Bryan Murray coordinates the child protection case with the family's domestic relation companion cases. The goals of the project are to improve outcomes for children by coordinating cases so that the judge hearing the child protection case also hears related cases involving the family such as civil orders for protection in domestic violence cases, divorce, post-divorce modifications and juvenile corrections. The expected benefits are fewer hearings for families and the court, more consistent orders, earlier identification of issues and necessary interventions to facilitate either reunification of the children with their family or an earlier permanency decision.

"The process has proven to be a very effective way to resolve multiple issues without involving multiple judges and holding multiple hearings. The resulting orders are coordinated to better serve the families and issues are resolved for the entire family unit."

Judge Murray, Bannock County Juvenile Judge

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY The following measures will be utilized to evaluate the impact of the pilot projects on the court system and the families it serves:

- Total number of cases and related hearings by court;
- Number of hearings per filing;
- Comparison of court time per filing in coordinated and uncoordinated cases;.
- Number of hearings that deal with more than one issue;
- Services ordered for families;
- Comparison of consistency of orders;
- Time between first and last hearing;
- Time in temporary placement for children;
- Adoption rate of the children.

The following measures will be utilized to measure the difference, if any, in outcomes for the children and families whose cases were coordinated:

- Recidivism rates for juveniles;
- Timing, reason for and frequency of subsequent filings by the families;
- Services ordered for families;
- Survey sample of children after a specified time to measure stability and well-being;
- Review of case progress at a pre-identified time to determine if case coordination resulted in earlier access to services, more services ordered, and/or earlier reunification or permanency decisions.

=====DISPUTE RESOLUTION

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR) SCREENINGS Alternative Dispute Resolution Screenings are designed to provide judges with important information about services that may contribute to resolution in high conflict divorces so that judges can make more informed decisions regarding case management. When the Court orders an ADR screening, a licensed, master level mental health professional interviews both parents using a standard guided interview and requests a Criminal Records Check with the permission of the parties. The Screener makes a written report to the court that summarizes the information from the two interviews and makes recommendations to the court on whether or not it appears that the parties could successfully engage in mediation. Other recommendations of services that might reduce the level of conflict between the parties and address underlying issues and needs of the family, that is based on the information provided in the interviews, are also made.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2003 In 2003, 217 families or 434 individuals participated in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Assessments statewide. Judges may order parents to undergo an ADR screening to gather more information about the family and the serious issues that are presented before the court.

Families with severe conflict are often faced with many complex issues. For example, in 67% of the cases that underwent an ADR Screening in 2002, there were allegations of serious alcohol or drug abuse. In addition to substance abuse issues, 48% of the families also alleged family violence, and in another 15% of cases, there were concerns regarding the safety of the children that included child abuse and neglect allegations. Mental health issues were present in approximately 16% of the cases that required an ADR Screening.

ADR Screeners are asked to complete a survey on each family they assess. The survey collects information on the demographics of the families ordered to ADR Screening. The survey then collects information on the outcome of the assessment: substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health issues present as well as the neglect or abuse of children in the home. The recommendations of the screener are indicated to allow comparison with the judge's order to determine the effectiveness of the assessment process.

An evaluation in Ada County of a sample of ADR Screenings completed between January 1, 1999 and December 31, 1999 evaluated whether the cases were reopened from their final judgment in 2000 to the period May 2002. Of the cases reviewed, 74% did not reopen in this time period, suggesting that a more effective and permanent resolution of the conflict was achieved.

FAMILY MEDIATION SERVICES Mediation is an alternative dispute resolution process that encourages divorced, divorcing or separating parents to agree to a parenting schedule that meets the developmental needs of the children. The mediation process enhances each parent's respective abilities to fully participate in the upbringing of their children. Idaho has implemented Rule 16(j), I.R.C.P., which provides for mediation in child

custody and visitation disputes. Rule 16(j) also sets forth the qualifications and training requirements for child custody mediators. The Idaho Supreme Court maintains a list of registered mediators in each judicial district. All judicial districts utilize mediators from the Supreme Court Roster to help parties reach a mutually acceptable agreement regarding a parenting schedule.

The process involves a mediator, an impartial third party, facilitating the resolution of family disputes by promoting the participants' voluntary agreement. The family mediator assists parties with communication, encourages understanding and focuses the participants on their individual and common interests. The family mediator works with the participants to explore options, make decisions and reach their own agreements. Mediation is a confidential process.

Mediation is not a substitute for legal representation, independent legal advice or counseling. Nor is it appropriate for all families. However, experience has established that mediation is a valuable option for many families because it can:

1. Increase the self-determination of participants and their ability to communicate;
2. Promote the best interests of children; and
3. Reduce the economic and emotional costs associated with the adversarial resolution of family disputes.

Effective mediation requires that the family mediator be qualified by training, experience and temperament; that the mediator be impartial; that the participants reach their decisions voluntarily; that their decisions be based on sufficient factual data; that the mediator be aware of the impact of culture and diversity; and that the best interests of children be taken into account. Further, the mediator should also be prepared to identify families whose history includes domestic abuse or child abuse.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2003 In 2003, Family Court Services Coordinators either arranged or directly provided mediation services to 546 families. In cases where the court determined mediation would benefit families, state appropriations paid for indigent families to mediate parenting disputes who otherwise would not have been able to afford the service. In addition, Family Court Services Coordinators in Sixth and Seventh Districts are utilizing parent/child mediation for juvenile offenders designed to help juveniles and their families problem solve and reduce the chance of the juveniles returning to court. Seventh District also provides volunteer small claims and victim-offender mediators. Additional training in parent/child mediation will be supported by the Millennium Fund and provided in other areas of the state.

“Mediation can be defined as the process by which the participants, together with the assistance of a neutral person or persons, systematically isolate disputed issues in order to develop options, consider alternatives, and reach a consensual settlement that will accommodate their needs. Mediation is a process that emphasizes the participant's own responsibility for making decisions that affect their lives. It is therefore, a self-

empowering process” (Folberg and Taylor, Mediation: A Comprehensive Guide to Resolving Conflicts Without Litigation, 1984, Jossey-Bass). Though some families are not able to come to agreement in the mediation process, working with a trained mediator may move the couple closer to agreement by thoroughly discussing the issues involved. It is estimated that thousands of additional families in Idaho benefit from mediation each year.

Family Court Services Coordinators in the Fourth and Seventh Judicial Districts reported results on 144 of mediation cases that were concluded in 2003. Of the 144 cases, 101 were able to come to full or partial agreement after working with a mediator.

Results of Mediation in a Sample of Cases

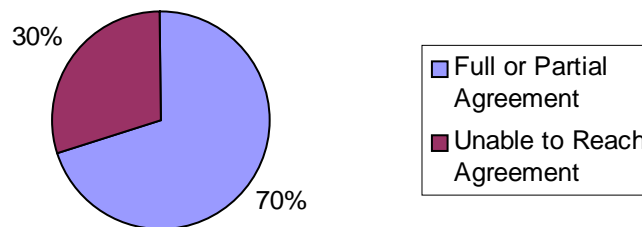


Figure 4: Results of Mediation

“When parents come to the court unable to agree about the care of their children, they are asking the court to make these decisions for them. Families cannot be divided by declaring winners and losers. When we go through the adversarial process, the strong feelings that come out in the courtroom create barriers that prohibit future cooperation. In the adversarial process, children always lose. The goal of mediation is to make children the winners. The judges of this district believe the children always win when parents make parenting decisions together rather than through the court.” Seventh District Mediation Brochure

FAMILY RECONCILIATION CONFERENCING This innovative program was started in the Seventh District in Fall 2003. Family Reconciliation Conferencing (FRC) is used in cases of juveniles being released from detention or incarceration. While in detention or incarceration, many juveniles are required to go through treatment programs that give them the tools to help them succeed once they are released. Often, these juveniles have made positive changes in their lives. However, too many times, the juveniles are released into families or other situations that have not changed. The goal of FRC is to give, not just the juveniles, but the families some of the tools they need to help the juvenile and the family succeed.

FRC consist of two phases: education and parent-child mediation. In the first phase, the family learns about conflict and conflict management. The family is provided with an information packet. During the second phase, the family experiences a process of conflict resolution by participating in mediation. In the mediation, the family discusses issues that may have caused conflict in their relationship and tries to find ways to address them. The result of the mediation is an agreement addressing the issues that are identified during the mediation. The agreement, in many cases will form the basis for a family plan for reintegration of the juvenile into the family and the community.

=====SUPERVISED VISITATION

Professional supervised visitation allows contact between the parent and children in the presence of a trained, neutral third party when certain risk factors to children are present. Supervised exchange is the utilization of a trained, neutral third party to facilitate the exchange of the children between the parents. Supervised visitation and/or exchange is ordered by the court when children may be at risk due to allegations of child abuse, substance abuse or other unsafe behavior, threats of parental abduction, intense parental conflict including domestic violence, when a child is refusing to spend time with a parent, when a parent (or relative) interferes with the rights of a parent to spend time with their child, and when the parent/child relationship has been interrupted for a significant period of time.

This service enables children to have access to, and a relationship with, both parents in cases where the safety of the child may be at risk or where the level of conflict or hostility between the parents makes face-to-face encounters unpredictable if not unsafe for children and parents.

As a temporary measure, supervised visitation will protect children while the court addresses the underlying problems and implements appropriate interventions for families in need. A typical order for supervised visitation may range from eight to ten hours per month for three to five months.

Supervised Access providers have undergone intensive training sponsored by the Supreme Court. They provide feedback to the Magistrate Judges on whether contact between children and parents are taking place as ordered and the quality of the interaction between parents and children during supervised visits.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2003 In 2003, over 600 families statewide received supervised visitation services. Cases involving one or more of the following issues benefited by supervised visitation or supervised exchange services:

- family violence
- substance abuse
- allegations or substantiated claims of child physical or sexual abuse or neglect
- parenting skills concerns
- a parent with serious mental health problems
- a flight risk or threats of abduction
- reunifying the parent and child after an extended period of time of separation.

Professional supervised visitation allows contact between the parent and children in the presence of a trained, neutral third party when certain risk factors to children are present. Supervised exchange is the utilization of a trained, neutral third party to facilitate the exchange of the children between the parents when intense conflict exists between the parents.

BANNOCK COUNTY PILOT PROJECT Also, in late 2002, the U.S. Department of Justice awarded a two-year pilot program to Bannock County to increase supervised visitation and exchange options for families with a history of domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault or stalking. The program, entitled “Safe Havens: Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Program” is a collaborative project between Bannock County, Sixth Judicial District Court Services, Family Services Alliance, and the Bannock County Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Taskforce.

The initial grant of \$73,152 is being used to develop a plan for supervised visitation and exchange services in the 6th District, which includes the development of policies and protocols for implementation and operation of a supervised visitation center. The target population will be rural and underserved populations within the county.

=====PARENT EDUCATION

Parent education is now available in all seven judicial districts and in most counties. The classes are designed for all parties with minor children who are involved in civil domestic relations cases including divorce, domestic violence, child custody, child support, in never married cases where paternity has been established, post divorce and other cases that involve families with children. The authority for ordering parents to parent education classes comes from the court's determination under Section 32-717 Idaho Code that it is in the best interest of the children.

The components of the classes have many similarities across the state. In some jurisdictions, the family law judges may teach the class and in other areas judges introduce the class and explain the reasons for the court's decision to require parents to attend. All of the classes are designed to heighten parents' awareness of the child's point of view and their needs both during and after the family restructuring. Developmental needs of children based on ages are presented as are suggestions about such things as parenting from a distance, handling issues that may arise from extended family members or friends, and seeking non-adversarial conflict resolution alternatives.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2003 In 2003, over 6,700 parents attended parent education and "Focus on the Children" classes to improve their understanding of the importance of keeping children out of the middle of conflict and to learn the important link between children's ages and developmentally appropriate parent plans. These classes impacted the lives of an estimated 10,000 children in Idaho during this time period.

Positive evaluations and feedback around the state reflect the value of education on divorcing parents and their children. Third District evaluations consistently show over 90% of attendees recognize the positive impact classes have on their parenting decisions and how parents will relate to each other in the presence of their children. Parents often share their personal experiences of the how the classes have improved their relationship with the other parent and their children. This story is one example that reinforces the importance of parent education.

I was substituting for another instructor for the first two classes of the series of three parenting classes that are required in the 5th District for divorcing couples. After the second class, a young man came up to me and said, "I want to thank you for these classes." I thought that he was just being polite so I told him that he was welcome and that I hope that they would prove helpful. Then he said, with tears in his eyes, "They already have!" He went on to tell me that he had filed for sole custody of his sons and was hoping that he would be able to just forget that they ever had a mother. After the information provided during the classes about how important it is for children to benefit from both parents involvement in their lives, he had a change of heart. He said that he called his wife and asked if she and the boys would get together with him to talk about their future. The whole family went out for pizza and mom and dad were able to agree that they could work out a shared parenting arrangement so that the boys would have time with both parents. He said that this was such a relief to him and that his boys were handling the divorce so much better, even after only a few days, knowing that they were not going to lose one of their parents.

Cheryl Turoczy Hart, Fifth District Family Court Services Coordinator

=====JUVENILE JUSTICE

Because young offenders are believed to be particularly malleable and susceptible to moral and social rehabilitation, the juvenile court seeks to rehabilitate juvenile delinquents, thereby preventing future criminal behavior.” (The Janiculum Project)

One purpose of Idaho’s Juvenile Corrections Act is to “provide a continuum of programs” to address the needs of all levels of the offender population. Intervention and prevention programs are essential components to this continuum. Early intervention and identification of family issues can prevent future escalation to serious criminal behavior and the cycling of family dysfunction to future generations. Magistrate Judges are active partners in developing and implementing innovative programs at the local level that focus on prevention and intervention of this early delinquent behavior. For the past four years, the legislature has appropriated monies from the Millennium Fund to expand youth courts and status offender services programs.

FIFTH DISTRICT STATUS OFFENDER SERVICES The Status Offender Services Program was implemented in Twin Falls in 1998 to create a resource for first-time status offenders and their families. The program focuses on developing partnerships between community and court programs. Referral of a status offender to the program can come from law enforcement, schools, a social service agency or parents of the status offender. The Status Offender Coordinator assesses the needs of the juvenile and develops a case plan to enhance the skills of both the juvenile and the family. The Status Offender Program serves Twin Falls, Minidoka, Cassia, Jerome, Blaine and Lincoln Counties. In the 2002 year end evaluation report, the Status Offender Services Program reported serving over one thousand juveniles in the district. The program reported over ninety percent of the status offenders served in 2001, who completed the program successfully, had not "re-offended" in the twelve month period.

IDAHO’S YOUTH COURTS Youth Courts are a diversion program from the formal court system for first-time offenders who plead guilty to offenses such as tobacco charges, alcohol consumption or other non-violent crimes. The offender appears before the Youth Court, staffed with youth as attorneys, bailiff, clerk and jurors. An adult judge conducts the hearing utilizing standard court procedure. A jury of peers sentences the offender to community service, tobacco and alcohol awareness programs, self-esteem courses, essay writing and/or Youth Court jury duty. Sentences are educational and encourage accountability and responsibility for actions. Once the offender completes the sentence, the offense is dismissed from their record.

Over 2,000 volunteers operate Youth Courts in Idaho. Youth Courts are currently located in 12 of Idaho’s counties serving over 750 juveniles in a year. Of the teens sentenced in Youth Court, over 90% complete their sentence and 75% of these juveniles do not go on to re-offend within the year.

“CONSTRUCTING A FUTURE” IN BANNOCK COUNTY Innovative programming in Bannock County teaches young offenders a skill while they earn money to pay restitution and court costs. The Bannock County Juvenile Probation Department purchases a home in need of restoration. Juveniles on probation are taught the necessary skills and employed to renovate the residence. Professional contractors are hired where necessary to ensure quality craftsmanship and a probation officer with construction experience monitors the activities of the juveniles closely. When the renovation is complete, the home is sold and the proceeds are used to buy another “project.” The juveniles learn a trade while earning money to pay victim restitution and court costs. The juveniles also benefit from the experience of working as a team to improve the neighborhood and give something back to their community. Participants are drug tested on a random basis. They attend classes on resume writing, interviewing and other skills. Several juveniles in the program have benefited from a good job reference when looking for work.

The program allows a partnership with other organizations in the community such as: The City of Pocatello, School District #25, Housing Authority of Pocatello, and local business people and contractors. This is an excellent application of the balanced approach in programming by “protecting the community, holding the juvenile accountable for his actions, and assisting the juvenile in developing skills to become a contributing member of a diverse community.” (Idaho Code 20-501) The program is currently renovating its third home.

ADA COUNTY ATTENDANCE COURT Ada County implemented an Attendance Court in Fall 2000 to address the chronic absenteeism of elementary students in the county. A student with excessive absences is referred to the Attendance Court. The Attendance Court Coordinator reviews the case and determines if it is an appropriate case for intervention. If so, a court hearing is scheduled and a summons is issued. Though the hearing is less formal, it does maintain the formal feel of a court hearing in many ways: the judge is fully robed and accompanied by the court clerk, volunteer attorneys meet with parents and attend, and the format is fairly structured with representatives from the school present. The point of the hearings is not to establish guilt or innocence but to discuss the obstacles that are preventing the child from getting to school and to put in place an agreement between the court and the parent to help improve the child’s attendance.

Recently, a study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the Ada County Attendance Court. Short-term outcomes showed that of the 114 cases evaluated, eighty-four students or seventy-seven percent of the cases reviewed showed that students’ attendance improved after the initial hearing. In addition, eighty students or seventy-three percent of the cases reviewed showed that the students’ grades improved after the initial hearing.

JUVENILE DETENTION REFORM INITIATIVE Ada County Juvenile Court Services was chosen by Annie E. Casey Foundation as a pilot site for detention reform. The objectives of detention reform are to: 1) eliminate the inappropriate or unnecessary use of secure

detention; 2) minimize failures to appear and the incidence of delinquent behavior; 3) redirect public finances from building new facility capacity to responsible alternative strategies; and 4) improve conditions in secure detention facilities. Ada County is successfully engaged in the process and feeling the benefits of the reform in both the number of juveniles in detention and the length of stay of these juveniles.

=====FOSTER CARE

In November 1997, Congress passed the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) as part of a massive effort to reform America's child protection system that began with the passage of the federal Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980. This reform was in response to an early 1990 finding that children who had been removed from the care of their parent, or other persons in charge of parenting children due to abuse and neglect, were languishing in out-of home care for an estimated three years or more. "Child development specialists agree that the ability to form lasting bonds [attachments] with any caregiver is severely reduced [when] a child undergoes too many separations or lingers in impermanence too long. By allowing impermanence for abused and neglected children in our care, we are damaging children's capacity to form the lasting ties that make families secure and safe." (*Children Can't Wait, Reducing Delays in Out-of-Home Care*, Child Welfare League of America, edited by Cahn & Johnson at 1 (1993))

The federal Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 expanded and redefined the role and responsibilities of the courts in child protection cases. The enhanced role of the courts included prompt review of decisions to remove children from the home, oversight efforts to prevent placement and reunify families, and periodic review of child protection cases. (State Court Assessments 1995-1998: *Dependency Proceedings*, American Bar Association, vol. 1 at 4 (1999).) Idaho courts have been working diligently to strengthen and improve the court's role in the child protection process. In 1998, the Idaho Supreme Court established the Committee to Reduce Delays for Children in Foster Care (Foster Care Committee). The charge of the Foster Care Committee is to:

- Identify factors contributing to delays in reunification of families, termination of parental rights where appropriate, and permanent placements;
- Make recommendations to reduce delays for children in foster care, develop shared accountability and unified standards of practice within and between key players in the children protection process.
- Develop a unified statewide judicial approach to child protection cases;
- Increase the number of voluntary terminations of parental rights;
- Minimize the trauma experienced by children after removal;
- Clarify the future role of long-term guardianship/foster care.

STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT A comprehensive statewide assessment of Idaho's child protection court in 2000 disclosed that, in many ways, Idaho's child protection courts are operating efficiently and effectively. Recommendations for enhancing the court's role in the child protection process included amendments to the Idaho Child Protective Act and the Idaho Juvenile Rules to make them compliant with federal law and reflective of best practices; early and increase notice to non-custodial parents; a restructuring of the court's review and permanency process; and enhancement of the data tracking and information management capabilities of the court's information system known as ISTARS.

In the last two years, the Foster Care Committee has made significant progress towards addressing these recommendations. The Idaho Child Protective Act was amended in 2001 and is now consistent with the requirements of ASFA and reflective of current best

practice standards. Amendments have been made to the Idaho Juvenile Rules and additional proposed amendments are in progress. The Foster Care Committee is working toward a statewide unified judicial approach to child protection by working closely with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare to co-host several multi-disciplinary trainings, including the “Children and Families in the Courts Institute” in 2000 and 2001 and providing multi-disciplinary training in seven judicial districts on ASFA and recent amendments to the Idaho Child Protective Act.

The committee has developed an Idaho children protection manual and formbook that is included on the electronic benchguide for judges and on a compact disc for attorneys and bench cards for Idaho child protection judges. Additionally, Foster Care Committee member Honorable Lynne Krogh is a member of the Idaho Drug Endangered Children Task Force that was established to develop a protocol for a coordinated response for drug endangered children. The primary charge of the Task Force is the development of an integrated, multiagency response protocol that will be implemented when children are found in homes where methamphetamine is being manufactured. The Foster Care Committee, through Judge Krogh, works closely with this task force to provide information as well as comments and recommendations in regard to the proposed protocol.

CHILD PROTECTION MODULE IN ISTARS Another significant project by the Foster Care Committee is the development of a child protection module that will enhance ISTARS’ ability to track critical child protection data elements and generate key reports, both of which are necessary to identify areas of concern and measure the success of changes in the child protection system.

The project to develop the child protection module for ISTARS was recently expanded when the Foster Care Committee, in collaboration with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare and the Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections received a grant award on November 25, 2003 from the Federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to establish technological connectivity between the information systems of the courts, the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, the Department of Juvenile Corrections, and other key agencies involved in the child protection process. Key members from each of the collaborating entities will work together to design and implement connectivity between their respective information management systems. National experts will provide technical assistance as needed.

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW In August 2003, a final report of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the state of Idaho was released. The findings were derived from a statewide assessment, prepared by the State child welfare agency, a State Data Profile prepared by the Children’s Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, a review of 50 cases from Ada, Bannock and Nez Perce counties from April 2002 through 2003, and interviews with stakeholder in child protection cases including but not limited to children, parents, foster parents and all levels of child welfare agency personnel, court personnel and attorneys. Members of the Foster Care committee participated in all phases of the Child and Family Services Review.

In the final report, federal reviewers noted both strengths and areas in need of improvement: “The CFSR determined that the Department is effectively placing children in close proximity to their families and helping children to retain relationship with their families and to maintain other important connections while in foster care, including using relatives as placement resources appropriately. The Department is also effectively addressing the education needs of children and is doing well with regards to active recruitment of adoptive and foster parent programs. The Department’s electronic system was found to be effective by the federal evaluators. The two weakest areas of State performance on the outcomes occurred for Permanency Outcome 1 (Children have permanency and stability in their living situations) and Well Being Outcome 1 (Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children’s needs). (Idaho *Child and Family Services Review*, Final Report. US. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families Administration on Children, Youth and Families Children’s Bureau (August 2003).)

The strength identified for the courts in the CFSR is that for the most part, the courts are holding 6 month and permanency hearings in a timely manner. The Department was not in substantial conformity in regard to its efforts to serve families without removing children from the home. This finding suggests the need to investigate a possible rule change which would allow the court to obtain jurisdiction over abused and neglected children by way of a petition filed without a shelter care hearing to keep the children in the home while the family works with department social workers under a family service plan.

The Foster Care Committee and the Department will work collaboratively, over the next several years, to strengthen those areas the Children and Family Services Report suggested were in need of improvement. Collaborative efforts will focus primarily on statewide multidisciplinary training and strengthening and enhancing processes in both the Department and the courts that allow child protection cases to meet the timelines required by the Adoption and Safe Families Act.

Federal funding for the Foster Care Committee is available through 2006, allowing the Foster Care Committee to continue its commitment to and efforts toward strengthening the role that Idaho courts play in reducing delays for children in foster care and achieving permanency, stability and safety for Idaho’s children and families.

=====PILOT PROJECTS AND OTHER INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

SANDCASTLE PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN The Sandcastle class was implemented in the Fifth Judicial District for children ages 6 to 17 whose parents are divorcing. The program provides children with five hours of group classes with other children the same age. The goal of the class is to help children of divorcing or separating parents better cope with the trauma of the changes occurring in their family. Over 60 children attended the class in 2003.

A follow-up survey was administered to parents whose children had attended the program. Parents were asked about the usefulness of the program and 90% responded that the program was useful. Parents were then asked to respond to a series of questions for each of their children who participated in the program:

- 50% said their child's willingness to talk to parents about divorce-related feelings had improved.
- 47% expressed that their child had benefited from the program;
- 44% shared that attendance at Sandcastles and the parent involvement after the session had improved communication between the parent and child on divorce-related topics.

PARENTING EVALUATIONS A parenting evaluation is ordered by the court in a contested child custody proceeding or by stipulation of the parties. A parenting evaluation is typically used in Idaho as a "last resort" in a custody proceeding after less intensive options have been utilized such as mediation. A contested custody proceeding can be a traumatic experience for a family. The costs are great financially, emotionally, and in terms of time. The parenting evaluation will have a lasting impact on their lives.

The Parenting Evaluation is a process where the capacity of the parents is scrutinized with the clarity and objectivity of a qualified mental health professional. Evaluators always serve impartially, never as an advocate for one parent or the other. Some families can benefit from many of the positive aspects of having a professional offer insight and recommendations to a conflicted family. Additionally, a well-conducted parenting evaluation can help the family avoid a custody trial.

The primary purpose of a parenting evaluation is to assess the family and provide the courts, the parents, and the attorneys with objective information and recommendations. The assessment goals of a parenting evaluation are to (a) identify the developmental needs of the child(ren); (b) identify the strengths, vulnerabilities, and needs of all other members of the family; (c) identify the positive and negative family interactions; (d) develop a plan for custody and access utilizing the strengths of each individual that will serve the best interests of the child(ren) and within those parameters, the wishes and interests of the parents, and in most situations provide them with an opportunity to share in the upbringing of their child(ren); and (e) through a written report, provide the court, parents, and attorneys with these recommendations and supporting data.

INTERIM PARENTING TIME EVALUATION An Interim Parenting Evaluation (IPTE) is a brief, focused evaluation aimed at helping resolve temporary custody disputes. The goals of the evaluation are; 1) to protect the best interests of children; 2) to promote dispute resolution through agreement rather than court order; 3) provide effective and timely case disposition. Twenty-nine families have undergone an Interim Parenting Evaluation since its implementation in 2003.

An IPTE provides the parties with the opportunity to be heard by a qualified, neutral mental health professional counselor. The mental health professional will develop recommendations for the parties to assist in establishing a workable parenting plan. An IPTE is meant to be an early intervention to provide an opportunity for the parties to begin working toward an agreed parenting arrangement. The recommendations made through an IPTE are intended to address temporary custody issues and should not be construed as recommendations for permanent custody arrangements.

PARENTING COORDINATORS As a result of legislation effective July 1, 2002, Parenting Coordinators are utilized in very high conflict cases where the parents require guidance and assistance in making parental decisions. “The Parenting Coordinator will aid the parties in identifying disputed issues, reducing misunderstandings, clarifying priorities, exploring possibilities for compromise and developing methods of collaboration in parenting. The Parenting Coordinator will make such decisions or recommendations as may be appropriate when the parties are unable to do so. The goal of the Parenting Coordinator should always be to empower the parents in developing and utilizing adaptive parenting skills so that they can resume the parenting and decision making role in regard to their own children. When it is not possible for the parents to agree, the Parenting Coordinator shall provide only the amount of direction and service required in order to serve the best interest of the child by minimizing the degree of conflict between the parties.” I.R.C.P. 16(l)

With this new rule in place and a roster of qualified Parenting Coordinators on the court website, Judges and Family Court Services Coordinators will be able to utilize this service with families who are highly unstable and need the guidance and assistance of a professional in parenting decisions.

=====FUNDING SOURCES

In the 2001 Session, the legislature appropriated \$640,000 for implementation and operation of Coordinated Family Services. This state funding provided a foundation which could also be leveraged to access federal grants, county support and other funding sources, resulting in a full range of services available for children and families in the courts statewide.

After permanent reductions in the Court's budget, the fiscal year 2003 state funding for children and families was reduced to \$507,300. Per House Bill 716, the legislature joined the Supreme Court "in the recognition that Drug Court and Family Court Services preserve families, increase public safety and provide cost-effective alternatives to incarceration." The legislature encouraged the Supreme Court "to preserve, to the extent possible, these programs in the face of budget reductions."

In compliance with the subsequent 3.5% holdback, the Court further reduced the Coordinated Family Services state appropriated budget to \$180,750. One-time funding opportunities and cost savings allowed the Family Court Services and Court Assistance Offices to maintain operations, albeit at a much reduced level.

HB 369 was passed in the 2003 Legislative Session and provides "a surcharge added to the price of goods sold in the State Liquor Dispensary; to provide for the deposit of moneys into the Drug Court and Family Court Services Fund." This dedicated fund replaced any remaining state general funds and will now provide annual opportunities to support drug courts and coordinated family services.

===== ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information, contact:

Patricia Tobias, Administrative Director of the Courts

Phone: (208) 334-2246

Email ptobias@isc.state.id.us

=====APPENDIX A

TITLE 32
DOMESTIC RELATIONS
CHAPTER 14
COORDINATED FAMILY SERVICES

32-1401. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS. The legislature finds that there is an increasing incidence of children and family members in more than one (1) court proceeding, including juvenile corrections, domestic violence, domestic relations, adoptions, and child protection actions, and there is a need to coordinate these diverse cases and related family services to provide an effective response to the needs of these children and families.

32-1402. DECLARATION OF PURPOSE. The legislature declares that an effective response to address the needs of families and children in resolving these disputes would include the following:

(1) Case management practices that provide a flexible response to the diverse court-related needs of families involved in multiple court cases which will promote the efficient use of time and resources of the parties and the court, and avoid conflicting court orders;

(2) The expansion of available non-adversarial methods of dispute resolution, including mediation of child custody and visitation disputes and alternative dispute resolution assessments;

(3) Coordination of family dispute issues with related litigation involving the juvenile correction laws and criminal laws;

(4) A family court services coordinator to assist families in need to connect with appropriate resources for the family, to provide assessment information to the court to assist in early case resolution, and to conduct workshops which will educate the parties on the adverse impact of high conflict family disputes upon children, identify the developmental needs of children, and emphasize the importance of parenting plans and mediation techniques which peacefully resolve child custody and visitation issues;

(5) A court assistance officer to provide assistance to parties without legal representation to help them understand the legal requirements of the court system, including educational materials, court forms, assistance in completing court forms, information about court procedures, and referrals to public and community agencies and resources that provide legal and other services to parents and children;

(6) Supervised visitation by trained providers to assure the safety and welfare of children in cases where certain risk factors are identified; and

(7) The adoption of other methods and procedures which will promote a timely and effective resolution of related disputes in court cases involving children and families.

32-1403. IMPLEMENTATION OF A COORDINATED FAMILY SERVICES PLAN. The supreme court may establish a committee consisting of representatives of the judicial, executive and legislative branches to implement a coordinated family court services plan for a comprehensive response to children and families in the courts. The

committee shall recommend, for adoption by the supreme court, policies and procedures that will carry out the purposes of this chapter.

32-1404. EVALUATION OF FAMILY COURT SERVICES PLAN. The supreme court shall conduct a study measuring the effectiveness of an appropriation for family court services and report the results of its study to the governor and to the legislature by the first day of the legislative session.

32-1405. ADMINISTRATION OF FUNDING. Subject to the appropriation power of the legislature, the supreme court shall be responsible for administering, allocating and apportioning all funding resources for children and family court services, including grants, contributions, and appropriations from the legislature, to each judicial district upon their submission of an appropriate plan for family court services.

=====APPENDIX B

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN THE COURTS COMMITTEE ROSTER

Co-Chairs: Hon. Larry R. Duff and Thomas F. Dial, Esq., Viki Howard, Project Coordinator

Alsaker-Burke, Debra, J.D.
Foster Care Committee

Ashton, Bev
Dept. of Juvenile Corrections

Beal-Gwartney, Tore, Esq.
Cosh, Humphrey, Greener & Welsh

Brandt, Professor Elizabeth B.
University of Idaho College of Law

Box, Honorable Gaylen L.
Bannock County Magistrate Judge

Castleton, Honorable Lowell
Ada County Family Violence Court

Comstock, Honorable Russell A.
Ada County Magistrate Judge

Costello, Professor Patrick D.
University of Idaho, College of Law

Culet, Honorable Gregory M.
Third Judicial District Judge

Dial, Thomas F., Esq.
Dial, May & Rammell

DeMeyer, Honorable Gary D.
Canyon County Magistrate Judge

Dennard, Honorable Michael
Ada County Magistrate Judge

Derden, Cathy, Esq.
Idaho Supreme Court Staff Attorney

Duff, Honorable Larry R.
Fifth Judicial District Magistrate Judge

English, Daniel J.
Kootenai County Clerk of the District Court

Field, Debbie
Representative Idaho Legislature

Flammia, Sue, Esq.,
Flammia & Solomon

Fletcher, W. Kent, Esq.

Halligan, Chuck
Bureau Chief, Family & Children's Services

Hammond, Russ
Department of Education

Isaacs, Christine, Ph.D.

Just, Ann, LPC
Family Court Services Coordinator

Keller, Corrie,
Idaho Supreme Court

Michaelson, Terry, Esq.
Hamilton, Michaelson, Hilty, LLP

Pall, Linda L.B., Esq.

Price, Joel
J. A. & Kathryn Albertson Foundation

Rammell, Honorable Mark S.
Madison County Magistrate Judge

Simpson, Honorable Benjamin R.
Kootenai County Magistrate Judge

Squire, Honorable Orin L. (Lee)
Clearwater County Magistrate Judge

Stecher, Diane
Boise City Victim Witness Coordinator

Thompson, Frances H., Esq.
Court Assistance Office

Tobias, Patricia
Administrative Director of the Courts

Tyler, Marie T., Esq.

White, Honorable Eva
Nez Perce Tribal Court

Wright, Linda
Trial Court Administrator

Young, Honorable Patricia G.
Boise County Magistrate Judge

=====APPENDIX C

SERVICES PROVIDED AT THE *COURT ASSISTANCE OFFICES*:

- Information on the risks of self-representation
- Information on attorneys and types of services they can provide (i.e., pro bono and reduced rate representation, unbundled services)
- Referral to mediators
- Application for direct legal services for low-income individuals (i.e., Idaho Legal Aid Services, Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program)
- Toll-free Legal Resource Line for brief legal consultations (operated by the Idaho Law Foundation), domestic violence hotline (through Idaho Legal Aid Services) and legal research line (from the Idaho State Law Library)
- Information on services provided by government and private agencies
- Court forms and instructions for some types of civil cases, with an emphasis on family law
- Review of completed court forms
- Written instructions on how to proceed with some types of civil cases, including which forms to use and how to fill them out
- Use of computers to prepare court documents, and research and access other Internet resources
- Informational brochures and pamphlets on a variety of legal topics, organizations and agencies
- Information on pro se litigation workshops sponsored by Idaho Legal Aid Services and Idaho Volunteer Lawyers Program
- Information and referral to resources to protect children in high-conflict cases (e.g. visitation supervisors)
- Instructional videos, with accompanying brochures on topics including an introduction to the court system, family law, and domestic violence
- Workshops on obtaining a divorce, and on modifying and enforcing divorce or custody decrees
- **CAO Website to access and download court forms, instructions, and other CAO resources** (<http://www2.state.id.us/cao>).

Many materials are available in both English and Spanish, and a certified Court interpreter is available by telephone through the CAOs.

=====APPENDIX D

Court Assistance Office - Customer Satisfaction Survey

County_____

Please take a few minutes to help us improve the services we are providing to you. All information you provide is confidential. Do not write your name on this form. When you have finished, place the completed survey in the sealed drop box at the Court Assistance Office or mail it to Court Assistance Offices ~ Administrative Director of the Courts ~ PO Box 83720 Boise, ID 83720-0101. Thank you for your time and assistance.

Today's Date: ____/____/____ What County do you reside in? _____

How many times have you represented yourself in court in the past? (If never please write in 0.) _____

How did you learn about the Court Assistance Office? _____

Do you feel that the information provided by this office was helpful or informative?

() No () Yes

Do you feel that the information provided by this office helped to increase your satisfaction with the court process? () No () Yes

Please explain:

Do you find the office location to be convenient?() No () Yes

Did the staff seem knowledgeable and able to answer your questions?

() No () Yes

How long did you have to wait before someone was available to help you?

- () Immediately
- () 5 – 15 minutes
- () 15 – 30 minutes
- () 30 minutes – 1 hour
- () Over 1 hour

What services did you use today? () Referral to local attorney

(Check all that apply.)

- () Referral to social service
- () Referral to legal services program
- () Referral to legal advice line
- () Mediation services (including referral)
- () Legal information (books, pamphlets, etc. discussing courtroom and legal procedures)

- ☐ Legal information videos
- ☐ Computerized assistance
- ☐ Workshop or workshop information
- ☐ Information on protecting children (ADR screening, supervised visitation)
- ☐ Obtained necessary forms
- ☐ Obtained instructions on proper completion of forms
- ☐ Form review
- ☐ Other: _____

Which one was most helpful?
(Check only one)

- ☐ Referral to local attorney
- ☐ Referral to social services
- ☐ Referral to legal services program
- ☐ Referral to legal advice line
- ☐ Mediation services (including referral)
- ☐ Legal information (books, pamphlets, c.)
- ☐ Legal information videos
- ☐ Computerized assistance
- ☐ Workshop or workshop information
- ☐ Information on protecting children
- ☐ Obtained necessary forms
- ☐ Obtained instructions on proper completion of forms
- ☐ Form review
- ☐ Other: _____

Were you given information about other agencies or services that are available and might be helpful? ☐ No ☐ Yes

Would you return to this office for assistance in the future? ☐ No ☐ Yes
Why or why not?

Other Comments:

Optional statistical information: *It would be helpful to us if you would provide the following information about yourself. Like your other answers, the information is submitted anonymously.*

What is your age? _____ What is your gender? ☐ Male ☐ Female

What is your ethnicity? ☐ White ☐ Asian
☐ Black ☐ Native American

☐ Hispanic
☐ Other

☐ Pacific Islander

How far do you live from the courthouse? ☐ 0-6 miles ☐ 7-15 miles
☐ 16-25 miles ☐ 26-50 miles
☐ more than 50 miles

What is your annual household income? ☐ Less than \$15,000
☐ \$15,001 -- \$20,000
☐ \$20,001 -- \$30,000
☐ \$30,001 -- \$40,000
☐ \$40,001 -- \$50,000
☐ Over \$50,000

What is the highest grade you have completed in school?

=====APPENDIX E

ADR SCREENING AND REFERRAL SURVEY

Today's Date: ___/___/___ Case No. _____ Counties where participants reside:

Mother: _____ Father _____ Other (step-parent, grandparent) _____

Parents are: ☐ married ☐ divorced ☐ never-married ☐ remarried

Number of biological children between the parties _____

What are their ages? Child 1 - age: _____ Child 3 - age: _____ Child 5 - age: _____
Child 2 - age: _____ Child 4 - age: _____ Child 6 - age: _____

Total number of children (step-children) between the parties _____

What are their ages? Child 1 - age: _____ Child 3 - age: _____ Child 5 - age: _____
Child 2 - age: _____ Child 4 - age: _____ Child 6 - age: _____

Information about father: Age: _____

Race/ethnicity of father: ☐ White ☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ Asian
☐ Native American ☐ Pacific Islander ☐ Other

Number in father's household including father: _____

Father's household income: ☐ Less than \$15,000 ☐ \$15,001 -- \$20,000
☐ \$20,001 -- \$30,000 ☐ \$30,001 -- \$40,000
☐ \$40,001 -- \$50,000 ☐ Over \$50,000

Father's highest level of schooling

☐ Some high school ☐ High school graduate
☐ Associate degree ☐ Some college
☐ College degree ☐ Post graduate education

Information about mother: Age: _____

Race/ethnicity of mother: ☐ White ☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ Asian
☐ Native American ☐ Pacific Islander ☐ Other

Number in mother's household including mother: _____

Mother's household income: ☐ Less than \$15,000 ☐ \$15,001 -- \$20,000
☐ \$20,001 -- \$30,000 ☐ \$30,001 -- \$40,000
☐ \$40,001 -- \$50,000 ☐ Over \$50,000

Mother's highest level of schooling

☐ Some high school ☐ High school graduate

☐ Associate degree

☐ College degree

☐ Some college

☐ Post graduate education

Issues described by parents resulting in parental conflict:

Substance abuse by one ___ or both ___ parties. Alcohol Abuse _____ Drug of Choice _____

Domestic violence by one ___ or both ___ parties.

Other power and control issues described by ___ one or both ___ parties: money ☐ children

☐

Relationships ☐ Other:

Protection Order obtained by mother (current or past) ☐ Yes ☐ No

Protection Order obtained by father (current or past) ☐ Yes ☐ No

Mental health concerns by one ___ or both ___ parties

Neglect and/or abuse of child(ren) ☐ Yes ☐ No

Stepparent concerns ☐ Yes ☐ No

Child support: ☐ non-payment ☐ modification

Other concerns expressed by parents:

Recommendations of ADR Screener: (check all that apply)

[☐] Parent education
alcohol Assessment

[☐] Hair follicle test
Visitation Services

[☐] Domestic violence assessment
children

[☐] Anger management assessment
Evaluation

[☐] Other _____

[☐] Mediation

[☐] Drug and/or Alcohol Treatment

[☐] Counseling for one or both parents

[☐] Domestic Violence Evaluation

[☐] Family Resolutions

[☐] Effective Co-Parenting

[☐] Drug and/or

[☐] Supervised

[☐] Counseling for

[☐] Parenting

[☐] Effective Co-Parenting

Other comments:

Mail completed form to:

Your Name
Family Court Services
Your Address, city, State & Zip
Your Telephone Number

Supervised Visitation Survey

Today's Date: ____/____/____ Case No. _____ Counties where participants reside:

Mother: _____ Father _____ Other (step-parent, grandparent) _____

Supervised Visitation [] Supervised Exchange []

Parents are: ☐ married ☐ divorced ☐ never-married ☐ remarried

Number of biological children between the parties _____

What are their ages? Child 1 - age: _____ Child 3 - age: _____ Child 5 - age: _____
Child 2 - age: _____ Child 4 - age: _____ Child 6 - age: _____

Total number of children (step-children) between the parties _____

What are their ages? Child 1 - age: _____ Child 3 - age: _____ Child 5 - age: _____
Child 2 - age: _____ Child 4 - age: _____ Child 6 - age: _____

Information about father: Age: _____

Race/ethnicity of father: ☐ White ☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ Asian
☐ Native American ☐ Pacific Islander ☐ Other

Number in father's household including father: _____

Father's household income: ☐ Less than \$15,000 ☐ \$15,001 -- \$20,000
☐ \$20,001 -- \$30,000 ☐ \$30,001 -- \$40,000
☐ \$40,001 -- \$50,000 ☐ Over \$50,000

Father's highest level of schooling

☐ Some high school ☐ High school graduate
☐ Associate degree ☐ Some college
☐ College degree ☐ Post graduate education

Information about mother: Age: _____

Race/ethnicity of mother: ☐ White ☐ Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ Asian
☐ Native American ☐ Pacific Islander ☐ Other

Number in mother's household including mother: _____

Mother's household income: ☐ Less than \$15,000 ☐ \$15,001 -- \$20,000
☐ \$20,001 -- \$30,000 ☐ \$30,001 -- \$40,000
☐ \$40,001 -- \$50,000 ☐ Over \$50,000

Mother's highest level of schooling

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some high school | <input type="checkbox"/> High school graduate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate degree | <input type="checkbox"/> Some college |
| <input type="checkbox"/> College degree | <input type="checkbox"/> Post graduate education |

Supervised Visitation or Exchange Ordered because of the following allegations:

- ☐ Minimal prior contact between parent and child and/or prolonged visitation interruption
- ☐ Parenting Skills Concerns
- ☐ Parental Conflict without violence
- ☐ Visitation refusal by child or custodial parent interference with visitation
- ☐ Parental mental illness
- ☐ Substance Abuse Allegations
- ☐ Partner Abuse
- ☐ Physical Abuse of child
- ☐ Sexual Abuse Allegations
- ☐ Threat of abduction

For supervised visitation cases, please state how many hours per month were ordered _____

For supervised exchanges, please state how many exchanges per month were ordered _____

When did supervised visitation start? Date: _____

When will supervised visitation end? Date: _____

Do not know [☐] No provisions in Court Order for ending date [☐] Other: _____

Who is paying for supervised visitation? ☐ father ☐ mother ☐ both

Did you use a sliding fee schedule with ☐ father ☐ mother ☐ both

Are you aware of any other services the parents have received or are currently receiving? (Check all that apply)

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| [<input type="checkbox"/>] Parent education (focus on the children class) | [<input type="checkbox"/>] Mediation | [<input type="checkbox"/>] ADR Screening |
| [<input type="checkbox"/>] Drug and/or alcohol Assessment | [<input type="checkbox"/>] Drug and/or Alcohol Treatment | [<input type="checkbox"/>] Batterer's treatment program |
| [<input type="checkbox"/>] Counseling for one or both parents | [<input type="checkbox"/>] Family Counseling | [<input type="checkbox"/>] Counseling for children |
| [<input type="checkbox"/>] Domestic violence assessment | [<input type="checkbox"/>] Anger management assessment | [<input type="checkbox"/>] Anger management treatment |
| [<input type="checkbox"/>] Parenting Evaluation | [<input type="checkbox"/>] Other _____ | |

Other comments:

Mail completed form to:

Your Name
Family Court Services
Your Address, city, State & Zip
Your Telephone Number

=====APPENDIX G
FAMILY COURT SERVICES COORDINATORS

FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Janet Meserve
Kootenai County Courthouse
P.O. Box 9000
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83816-9000
(208) 446-1186
Fax: (208) 446-1187
Email: jmeserve@co.kootenai.id.us

SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Alfred J. Cole
Nez Perce County Courthouse
P.O. Box 896
Lewiston, ID 83501
(208) 503-0445;
Fax: (208) 746-1406
bsplanner@cableone.net

THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Dan Kessler
Trial Court Administrator
1115 Albany St.
Caldwell, ID 83605
(208) 454-7360
Fax: (208) 454-6626
Email: tca3@yc2.net

FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Renee Morse
Ada County Courthouse
200 W. Front St.
Boise, ID 83702
(208) 287-7600
Fax: (208) 287-7609
fcvorsrd@adaweb.net

FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Cheryl Turoczy Hart
Twin Falls County Courthouse
P.O. Box 126
Twin Falls, ID 83303-0126
(208) 735-4307
Email: chart@pmt.org

SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Kerry Hong
Court Services
P.O. Box 4847
Pocatello, ID 83205-4847
(208) 236-7377
Fax: (208) 236-7079
Email: kerryh@co.bannock.id.us

SEVENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Ann Just
Bonneville County Courthouse
605 N. Capital Avenue
Idaho Falls, ID 83221
Phone: (208) 529-1350 x1784
Fax: (208) 529-1300
Email: ajust@co.bonneville.id.us

APPENDIX H

COURT ASSISTANCE OFFICE LOCATIONS

FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT

- Bonner County
Court Assistance Officer
Janet Meserve
Bonner County Courthouse
215 S. 1st Avenue
Sandpoint, ID 83864
(208) 265-1449
Fax: (208) 263-9006
Email: cao@co.bonner.id.us
- Kootenai County
Court Assistance Officer
Janet Meserve
Kootenai County Courthouse
324 W. Garden Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83816
(208) 666-0868
Fax: (208) 664-8701

SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT

- Latah County
Court Assistance Officer
Frances H. Thompson
P.O. Box 9071
Moscow, ID 83843-9071
(208) 883-2240, Ext. 3500
Fax: (208) 883-2259 (CAO)
Email: cao@latah.id.us
- Nez Perce County
Court Assistance Officer
Amy Smoucha
Nez Perce County Courthouse
1230 Main St.
Lewiston ID 83501
(208) 799-3191
Fax: (208) 799-3058
Email: cao@co.nezperce.id.us

THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT

- Canyon County
Court Assistance Officer
Tony Salazar
1115 Albany St.
Room 315
Caldwell, ID 83605
(208) 454-7455
Fax: (208) 454-7442 or (208) 454-6626
Email: cao@canyoncounty.org

FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

- Ada County
Court Assistance Officers
Jane Newby / Alan Stewart
200 W. Front St.
Boise, ID 83702
(208) 287-6963 (CAO)
(208) 287-6944 (Jane)
Fax: (208) 287-6919
Email: dcnewbjm@adaweb.net
- Valley County
Court Assistance Officers
Debra Gaither
Valley County Deputy Clerk
219 Main St.
PO Box 1350
Cascade, ID 83611
(208) 382-7177
Fax: (208) 382-7184
Email: dgaither@co.valley.id.us
- Tamara Sandmeyer
Administrative Ass't/Risk Mgr
PO Box 737
Cascade, ID 83611
(208) 382-7145
Fax: (208) 382-7184

Email:
tsandmeyer@co.valley.id.us

FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

- Cassia County
Court Assistance Officers
Shantel Williams
1459 Overland Ave.
Burley, ID 83348
(208) 878-4461 X 298
Fax: (208) 878-1003
Email:
shantelw@cassiacyounty.org
- Gooding County
Court Assistance Officers
Leslie Renner, Deputy Clerk
Becky Tanner, Deputy Clerk
624 Main Street
PO Box 477
Gooding, ID 83330
(208) 934-5932 (CAO)
(208) 934-4261
Fax: (208) 934-4408
Email: lrenner@co.gooding.id.us
- Twin Falls County
Court Assistance Officer
Jerry Woolley
Jury Commissioner
PO Box 126
Twin Falls, ID 83303-0126
(208) 736-4137
Fax: (208) 736-4002
Email: jwoolley@co.twin-falls.id.us

SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

- Bannock County
Court Assistance Officer
Penny Brown
Bannock County Paralegal
624 E. Center
Room 220
Pocatello, ID 83201
(208) 236-7067
Fax: (208) 236-7012
Email:
pennyb@co.bannock.id.us
- Bear Lake County
Court Assistance Officer
Kerry Hong
624 E. Center
Pocatello, ID 83201
(208) 236-7377
Fax: (208) 236-7079
Email: kerryh@co.bannock.id.us
- Caribou County
Court Assistance Officer
Stacie Jorgensen
Deputy Clerk
PO Box 775
Soda Springs, ID 83276
Fax: (208) 547-4759
- Franklin County
Court Assistance Officer
Linda Hampton
Deputy Clerk
39 W. Oneida
Preston, ID 83263
(208) 852-0877
Fax: (208) 852-2926
Email: hampton@idacom.net

- Oneida County
Court Assistance Officer
Karen Wharton
Chief Deputy Clerk
10 Court Street
Malad, ID 83252
(208) 766-4285 X 114
Fax: (208) 766-2990
Email:
kwharton@co.oneida.id.us
- Power County
Court Assistance Officer
Sharee Sprague
543 Bannock
American Falls, ID 83211

(208) 226-7619
Fax: (208) 226-7612
Email: ssprague@co.power.id.us

SEVENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

- District Wide Court Assistance Office:
Court Assistance Officer
Cindy L. Campbell (CAO)
Attorney at Law
PO Box 853
Blackfoot, ID 83221
CAO cell phone: (208) 589-9872
Fax: (208) 785-5165
Email: cclcjd@aol.com